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MISSISSIPPI  
BAPTISTS

## Ahmandinejad dinner draws criticism

WASHINGTON (BP and local reports) -- The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), which counts a Southern Baptist ethicist as one of its members, is urging five religious organizations to cancel a September 25 dinner in New York city with Iran's anti-semitic president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, in conjunction with his visit to the United Nations.

The American Friends Service Committee, Mennonite Central Committee, World Council of Churches, Quaker United Nations Office, and Religions for Peace are set to host an "international dialogue" on the topic, Has Not One God Created Us? The Significance of Religious Contributions to Peace, at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Manhattan.

"It is our hope that as religious and political leaders, this communal meal and exchange of views will enable us to explore faith perspectives for dealing with global issues such as poverty, war and prejudice while deepening mutual understanding," the invitation to the event said.

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville and a USCIRF commissioner, is among those scheduled to speak at a rally against the dinner September 25 outside the Grand Hyatt on East 42nd Street starting at 5:30 p.m.

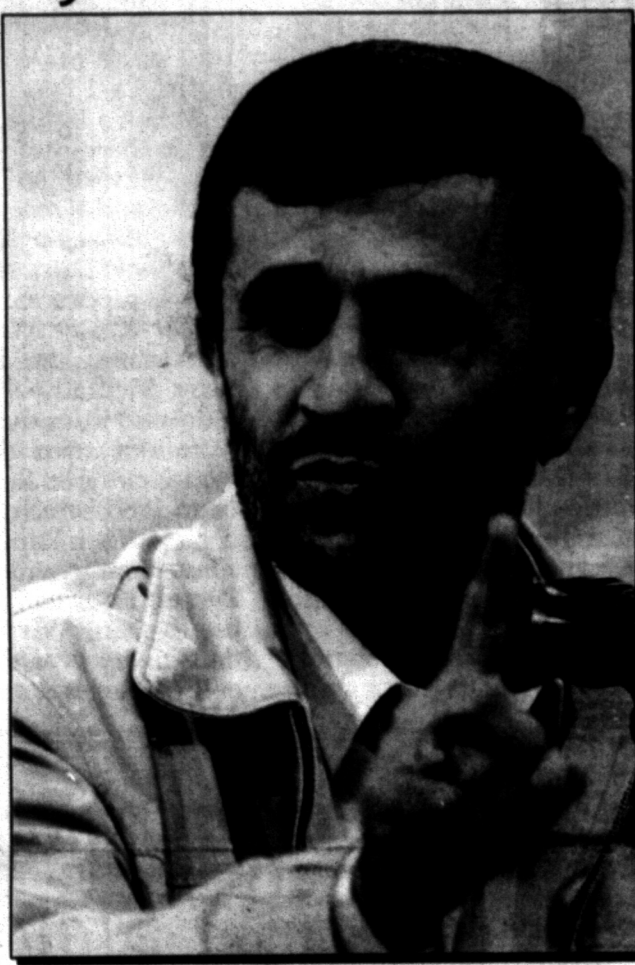
The rally, which is to include a number of organizations such as the Jewish Action Alliance and the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, also is meant to protest Ahmadinejad's presence at the United Nations and to oppose Iran's nuclear weapons program and threats against Israel.

USCIRF, which recently warned of Iran's plans to impose the death penalty for people convicted of so-called apostasy, wrote a letter to each of the organizations stating that the invitation and the platform for Ahmadinejad would be counterproductive to the groups' peace goals.

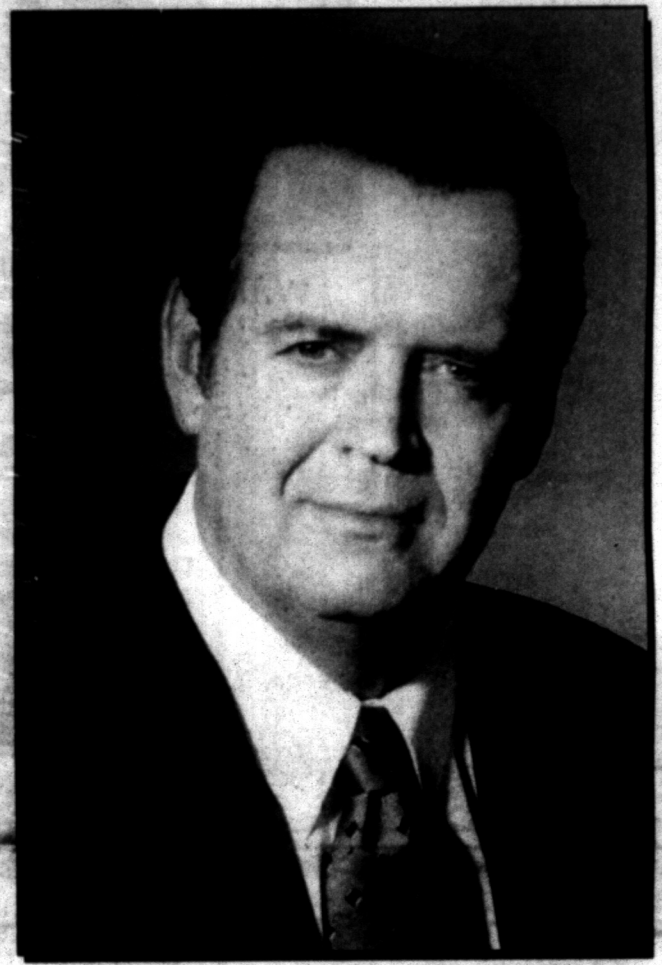
"President Ahmadinejad has manipulated such dialogues repeatedly into a platform for spreading hatred," Felice D. Gaer, USCIRF's chair, wrote. "He hosted some of the world's most notorious deniers of the Holocaust, racists, and anti-Semites at a 2006 conference questioning the well-established facts of the Holocaust and calling for the destruction of a member-state of the United Nations.

"The only accomplishment of such an invitation would be to burnish the Iranian leader's legitimacy and cleanse his reputation as a purveyor of hate," she added in the letters dated September 19.

In addition to the religious leaders, The Forward, a New York-based American Jewish newspaper, reported September 17 that the



Ahmadinejad



Land

president of the United Nations General Assembly, Miguel D'Escoto Brockman, also is expected to attend the private dinner with Ahmadinejad. Brockman is a Catholic priest from Nicaragua who is a vocal critic of the United States, the newspaper said.

Also scheduled to break the Ramadan fast with the Iranian president, The Forward said, is a former Norwegian prime minister, Kjell Magne Bondevik, who presides over the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights.

USCIRF expressed dismay at the timing of the meeting, with Gaer noting that "the invitation to President Ahmadinejad comes amid a rapidly accelerating deterioration of religious freedom and other human rights in Iran, including prolonged detention, torture and executions often based on the religion of the accused."

USCIRF noted: "It is disturbing enough that a leader who has worked so ruthlessly to close off channels for free expression at home should be given an opening to expound his views here."

The Iranian Parliament, the commission noted, is finalizing a new penal code that would mandate the death penalty for anyone in the nation convicted of leaving Islam. For that and a number of other grievances, USCIRF continues to recommend that the U.S. State Department include Iran on its list of "countries of particular concern."

"We are concerned that your 'dialogue' will be merely another platform for President Ahmadinejad to espouse an ideology of intolerance," Gaer wrote to each of the five reli-

gious organizations. "The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom would recommend that this event be canceled and that in any event you withdraw your organization's co-sponsorship."

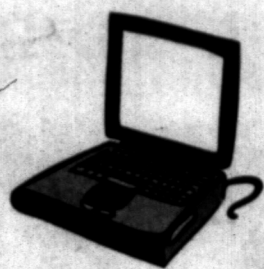
The Institute on Religion and Democracy (IRD), an ecumenical alliance of U.S. Christians, said September 18 that representatives of the Episcopal Church and other mainline denominations plan to attend the dinner with Iran's president. Such representatives visited Iran last year and hosted a similar event for Ahmadinejad with the National Council of Churches last fall in New York, IRD said.

"These confused prelates will undoubtedly minimize, if not ignore, the evils of the Iranian police state theocracy that brutalizes all who do not share its particular brand of Shiite Islam," Mark Tooley, executive director of United Methodist Action, said in the IRD news release. "They are more worried about what the U.S. might do to Iran than what Iran's deranged president, filled with apocalyptic dreams of destroying the U.S. and Israel, might do to the world."

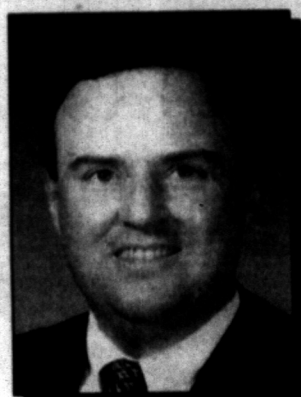
"The problem is not only the personality of one man, rather than the consistent policies of a 28-year-old repressively theocratic regime," he added. Tooley said he hopes organizers will confront Iran's threats to obliterate Israel as well as the country's harsh treatment of religious minorities.

"It will be interesting to see if the religious leaders confront Ahmadinejad on his Holocaust denials and nuclear ambitions, or merely 'engage' him with pleasantries and anti-American rhetoric," Tooley said.





## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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# Get ready, stay ready

As if the financial crisis in the U.S. isn't enough to make us lose sleep nightly, it appears likely the Middle East will soon erupt into the headlines once again. This week's scheduled visit of anti-semitic Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to New York City brings to mind once again the preponderance of problems in that area of the world that continue to demand a prominent place on the world stage.

At the confluence of what academics call the Great Religions of the World (Christianity, Judaism, and Islam), the Middle East has always seethed with intractable violence and political/religious intrigue. Mix that age-old problem with the world's unslakable thirst for oil — the dwindling remainder of which is overwhelmingly located in the Middle East — and an abundant supply of high-tech weaponry, and the potential is for tragedy on a scale we have never before seen.

It's a bad neighborhood and no one's record in the Middle East is without blemish, but it does appear that the Jewish state of Israel will once again be forced to defend itself against increasingly-sophisticated attacks from rump Islamic terrorist groups like Hezbollah that operate from nearby countries like Lebanon. Those groups are in turn heavily supported by countries like Syria and Iran, which widens any conflict and threatens to engulf the entire region in all-out war.

A little over a year ago, an air strike widely credited to the Israelis destroyed a

suspected Syrian nuclear development site. Many observers believe it is only a matter of time before Israel is forced to take out similar Iranian facilities in the name of self-preservation.

If war indeed comes to the Middle East, countries outside the region with "interests" will undoubtedly feel compelled to become involved, and whatever actions they take are not likely to lead to a lessening of tensions. Modern conventional weapons are capable of inflicting tremendous suffering and pain, but policymakers and war planners now must factor in the possible introduction of nuclear weapons.

Is all this beginning to sound like Armageddon? If so, we would not be the first generation to believe we are living in the Last Days.

When a lightning strike set off a massive fire in the virgin forests of the northeastern U.S., smoke so blackened the sky that Puritans downwind concluded the lack of daylight was a sign the Lord was on His way back. During the devastation of World War I, reports circulated that the German leader Kaiser Wilhelm II was the much-anticipated antichrist and the end was near. Virtually the same was said about Adolph Hitler during World War II.

In our own day, we have had Edgar Whisenant's 88 Reasons Why Rapture Could be in 1988, which sold more than 4.5 million copies. When Rapture didn't come in 1988, he conveniently wrote the follow up, Rapture Report 1989. Failing again to correctly date the Rapture, Whisenant updated his predictions every year through 1994 before apparently giving up.

We should keep Whisenant's story in mind when we are told this time, as we no doubt will be, that the end is near because of events currently transpiring in the Middle East and around the world. Instead of succumbing to the hystericism, we should simply resort to the words of Jesus in Matthew 24:36-44 (NIV):

*"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left."*

*"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him."*

There. Don't you feel better already? Don't try to divine the future. Don't even give a worry to the future. Just be ready. Live your life every day as if Jesus is on His way.

It's time people saw us living like we believe that, anyway.

## GUEST OPINION:

### Stay focused

By Roy Hayhurst  
GuideStone Financial Resources  
Dallas

and found 88% of the five-year periods and 97% of the 10-year periods yielded positive returns. While 100% of the 20-year periods yielded a positive return.

Essentially, the company found, an investor could choose any five-year period of time between 1926 and 2006, and almost nine out of 10 would show growth in an investor's portfolio. While past performance is no guarantee of future performance, the market itself has been resilient through the years.

Participants can periodically review their risk tolerance by utilizing GuideStone's Investor Profile Quiz, found on GuideStone's Web site ([www.GuideStone.org](http://www.GuideStone.org)) and in the Fund Choices booklet available through GuideStone's customer relations specialists at (888) 984-8433.

— Avoid making impulsive decisions. Guard against making ad hoc changes in your portfolio. Making changes based on short-term market

movements is almost a guarantee for failure as it promotes "buying high and selling low."

The performance of your account moving forward will be determined based on results of the financial markets in the future, not the past. Selling today cannot avoid yesterday's losses in a down market. Likewise, in an up market, you cannot buy yesterday's performance by investing in the hottest fund. If you absolutely have to make changes in your portfolio, consider making them in small increments. This allows you to "dollar cost average" and gives you time to more seriously

— Don't count your losses. Tallying up how much has been lost in your account serves no purpose. If you want to measure the progress/status of your investment account, focus on the gains realized in the equity (stock) markets over longer periods of time.

"It may seem difficult as investors watch their account bal-

ances decline, but the reality is that a focused investment discipline, diversification, and persistence will likely be the key to weathering this and other storms," Cummins said. "While lower market prices do cause uncertainty, this also can be an excellent time for opportunistic investors to move into the market while values are off their highs."

Maintain realistic expectations about market behavior. Financial markets move up and down over time in response to social, political and economic events. Further, equity investments are by nature more volatile than other asset classes such as cash and bonds. Equity investors should be able to accept significant short-term fluctuations in the value of their portfolios.

For a copy of the prospectus with this and other information about the funds, call (888)984-8433 or visit [www.GuideStoneFunds.org](http://www.GuideStoneFunds.org). Read the prospectus carefully before investing. Shares of GuideStone Funds are distributed by PFPC Distributors, Inc., a registered broker-dealer and underwriter of the funds, 760 Moore Road, King of Prussia, PA 19406.

Hayhurst is the senior marketing communications editor for GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, headquartered in Dallas. His commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press.



# Legislation will protect unfettered abortion

WASHINGTON (BP) — For years, pro-lifers have set their sights on changing the U.S. Supreme Court, hoping that a conservative judicial lineup would overturn *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 ruling that legalized abortion nationwide — but what if the Supreme Court someday overturns *Roe*, and abortion nevertheless remains legal?

That's the goal behind the Freedom of Choice Act, a bill in the House and Senate that would ensure abortion remains legal even if *Roe* someday is struck down by the nation's highest court. Just as problematic for the pro-life cause, the bill would lead to the overturning of nearly every abortion restriction on the books, including the federal ban on partial-birth abortion as well as state parental notification laws and waiting periods. Additionally, it almost certainly would force the public to fund abortion on demand.

The bill may sound far-reaching and even far-fetched to social conservatives, but it nevertheless has a legitimate chance of passing if not in this session of Congress, then in the next one.

It first was introduced in Congress in 1989 and seemed on the verge of passing four years later when President Clinton — who had backed it during the campaign — took office, but it never made it out of Congress and for the past 15 years hasn't had a real chance of success until now.

The Senate bill (S. 1173) has 19 co-sponsors, while the House bill (H.R. 1964) has 109 co-sponsors. Both bills were reintroduced April 19, 2007, the day after the Supreme Court

upheld the federal ban on partial-birth abortion.

"Attention always is focused on Supreme Court appointments and the likelihood of *Roe* being overturned," Douglas Johnson, legislative director for National Right to Life, told Baptist Press. "But Congress, by adopting something like this, would short-circuit that whole process. *Roe* would become almost irrelevant."

Johnson calls it the most radical piece of pro-choice legislation he's seen.

The bill states that "every woman has the fundamental right to choose to bear a child" and "to terminate a pregnancy" and that "a government" — meaning the federal government or any state or local government — may not "deny or interfere with a woman's right to choose (A) to bear a child; (B) to terminate a pregnancy prior to viability; or (C) to terminate a pregnancy after viability where termination is necessary to protect the life or health of the woman."

Language in the bill that apparently would force taxpayers to pay for abortion on demand states that a government may not discriminate against women "in the regulation or provision of benefits, facilities, services, or information" regarding abortion. The language presumably would apply to Medicaid and military hospitals.

"It's a very extreme measure," Johnson said. "It's a bill that would make partial-birth abortion legal again, force taxpayers to pay for abortion on demand and invalidate virtually all state and federal limitations on abortion. These radical pro-abortion



effects would continue even if *Roe vs. Wade* was overturned, because the bill really is entirely unconnected to *Roe vs. Wade*.

"Interfere with" is about as broad of language as you could come up with. It doesn't just cover the prohibition of abortion — it covers any kind of a barrier, any kind of impediment, any kind of delay. So, clearly, 'interfere' would be things that the court has upheld under *Roe*, such as brief waiting periods. There's no distinction between minors and adults, and clearly all of the procedural requirements for notifying parents with or without judicial bypass would be invalid under this."

Johnson's words may simply sound like the dire predictions of a pro-life advocate, but pro-choicers who support the bill acknowledge that it not only would "codify" *Roe* but also would lead to the striking down of state and federal abortion restrictions. Planned Parenthood, the nation's largest abortion provider, states on its website that the Freedom of Choice Act "would invalidate existing and future laws that interfere with or discriminate against" legalized abortion. The National Organization for Women — which also supports the bill — says on its website the bill "would override the Court's decision" in the partial-birth abortion ruling and would "supersede laws that

restrict the right to abortion, including laws that prohibit the public funding of abortion" and laws that require a waiting period before obtaining an abortion.

Pro-lifers also say the abortion rate almost certainly will go up if the bill is adopted. That's happened in Maryland, which passed a state-level Freedom of Choice Act in the early 1990s and has seen a steady increase in the abortion rate. The abortion rate in Maryland in 1995 was 25.6 per 1,000 women of reproductive age, and in 2005 had risen to 31.5 per 1,000. During that same time period, the national abortion rate fell from 22.5 in 1995 to 19.4 in 2005.

"One explanation of the decline in the national rate for abortions is the increased number of incremental laws addressing the abortion issue in each state ...," Tom McClusky of the Family Research Council wrote in an article examining the impact of the proposed bill.

The enactment of a federal Freedom of Choice Act would be a federalist's nightmare, overturning hundreds of state laws that have been enacted through legislation and statewide initiative and ballot referendums. ...Ironically, the Freedom of Choice Act would remove any concept of 'choice' from the equation, by eliminating the right of states and U.S. citizens to have a say in the debate."



## THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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### MBC ANNUAL MEETING '08

The Church Planting Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, will host its annual Church Planter's Appreciation Banquet Oct. 28, 5 PM, in the Baptist Building Chapel. For information or reservations contact: Scheryl Ng, [sng@mbcb.org](mailto:sng@mbcb.org), or call (601) 292-3361. Deadline for reservations is Oct. 15.

The annual meeting of the Mississippi alumni of Southwestern Seminary will be Oct. 28, noon, in the chapel dining room of First Church, Jackson. Tickets are \$11 and may be purchased from Paul Blanchard, Winston Association, P.O. Box 867, Louisville, MS 39339. Email [amd@winstonbaptist.org](mailto:amd@winstonbaptist.org) or call (662) 773-3366. Tickets must be purchased in advance.

## Chaplains bill introduced

WASHINGTON (BP) — Do military chaplains have the right to pray in Jesus' name in ceremonies outside of chapel services? The military insists they do, but U.S. Rep. Walter Jones (R.-N.C.) is attempting to write that guarantee into federal law. Shortly before Congress' summer recess, Jones introduced H.R. 6514, which would ensure chaplains the right to close a prayer outside of a religious service according to the dictates of the chaplain's conscience. Jones said he regularly has received complaints from officers and chaplains about such restraints. Eileen Lainez, a spokesperson for the U.S. Department of Defense, told Baptist Press its policy regarding religious accommodation for personnel states that a basic principle of the nation is free exercise of religion. "The Department of Defense does not endorse any one religion or religious organization, and provides free access of religion for all members of the military services," Lainez said. "The department respects (and supports by its policy) the rights of others to their own religious beliefs, including the right to hold no beliefs." Jonathan Sterzbach, pastor of Clear Springs Church in Alpharetta, Ga., said he hopes Jones' bill will guarantee every chaplain free exercise of religion, whether a Christian, Muslim, Hindu, or Jew. "This was a widespread problem in the division I served in," said Sterzbach, whose temporary removal from his chapel in 2006 prompted calls from Jones for an investigation that led to his reinstatement. While there are problems, any rank-and-file chaplain who complains about the problems is declared to not have "good discipline," Sterzbach said.

## Looking back

### 10 years ago

A ground breaking ceremony for the BSU at Jones Junior College is held Aug. 16. The new building will be 8,400 square feet and will include offices, chapel, assembly area, conference room/library, prayer rooms, game room, kitchen, and work room.

### 20 years ago

William Carey College trustees in a closed meeting vote not to renew school president Ralph Noonkester's contract past his 65th birthday next June. Noonkester has been president of the Baptist-affiliated, Hattiesburg-based college since 1956.

### 50 years ago

A recent study shows Southern Baptists are generally against any major changes in their annual convention pattern and are fairly solid against any change in the name of their denomination.





**YOU CAN RESPOND  
RIGHT NOW!**

*Simply share the following prayer  
with God in your own words:*

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. *(I have sinned.)*
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. *(I repent.)*
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. *(I believe in Jesus.)*
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. *(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)*

*"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)*

*If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.*

## DOING NOTHING

Some of you have probably heard the advertisement related to mortgage foreclosures. They conclude by saying, "Nothing is worse than doing nothing." The ad is trying to encourage people to be proactive to do what you can to reach out, let your status be known, to get more information, and to do something rather than just sit back and lose your home to foreclosure. "Nothing is worse than doing nothing."

At times, it does seem that doing nothing is the best thing to do, even the wise thing to do. You can on occasion act too quickly or overreact. It is possible to act before you give time for things to fall in place or to react before you have all of the information that is needed. On those occasions, patience and restraint are vitally important and it could be said that nothing is worse than doing something when you do not know what you are doing. All of us have probably been there or watched others in that situation. Still there is a great truth to be understood as you think about the statement, "Nothing is worse than doing nothing." The verse found in the Book of Numbers is a fascinating study that says, "Be sure your sins will find you out" (Num. 32:23). To me the most fascinating thing about it is to read the whole verse. "But if you fail to do this, you will be sinning against the Lord; and you may be sure that your sin will find you out." Now when you look at the whole verse you begin to understand that God is saying that the sin that will show up in our lives is the sin of doing nothing.

Most of the time it seems as though folks focus on sin as being a wrong act, an evil deed, or a vile expression. While that may be true, it is also true that

you can sin significantly and sin grievously by doing nothing. You may wonder how doing nothing can be harmful. Let me give you a couple of examples that may be helpful in understanding.

Through the years, how many times have you seen parents who did not think that it was important to involve their children in the things of God or to influence their kids in the direction of the Lord? At some point down the road, they begin to think "Well, maybe we need to help them focus on faith." At times, it has been as late as when the child gets ready to pack up and go off to college. Mom and Dad mentally and emotionally scurry around thinking that they need to hand off to them some things that have been given to us. Sometimes at that point they begin to think somewhere in the Bible it says, "Train up a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). You can pack up some Bible teaching, moral training, and some spiritual understanding along with his college wardrobe and everything will be all right.

If you wait until they are almost grown to let your children know how important Jesus is to you and should be to them, it will have a hollow ring to it and an insincere quality to it. On the other hand, consider that you do nothing about renewing a broken relationship.

## Directions

**Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board**

Reconciliation, whether it is with a friend, business partner, or a companion, is vitally important and yet seemingly repeatedly and consistently overlooked. People know that they need to do something, they need to forgive someone, they need to reach out to someone, and they need to ask for forgiveness. Yet they choose to do nothing. It was James who said in his little book, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas 4:17). Yet so many times, we know what we need to do but we do nothing.

Sometimes doing nothing is not just procrastination. It becomes a lifestyle. It stays in place until the opportunity is missed. The hope for reconciliation is irretrievable. While I have seen the results of doing nothing expressed in dozens of different ways, I remember a heartbreaking scene at a funeral home when we were about to leave and go to the cemetery. An only child stood over her mother's casket sobbing uncontrollably. There was no one around except the funeral director, who was waiting to close the casket, and me. She started talking somewhat under her breath but I clearly understood. "I am so sorry. I am so sorry. Mother, I am so sorry."

Having known the daughter and having watched the mother as she had repeatedly tried to reach out to the daughter to help, to love, to embrace, and to restore only to

be rejected, I knew what those words meant. I knew how meaningless those words were at least to the mother. After several minutes, the funeral director stepped up to her side and said, "We are going to have to go." It seemed as though the daughter was oblivious to his words and she stared into the casket continuing to say, "I am so sorry."

What is there in your life and in your circle of influence and need that you should address today? Is it an act of kindness? Go ahead and do it. Is it a phone call? Make it! Is it a need for forgiveness? Ask! Is it a request for forgiveness? Give it! Is it an expression of kindness? Show it! Is it an expression of appreciation? Offer it. Keep in mind that oftentimes, "Nothing is worse than doing nothing."

The author can be contacted at [jfutral@mbcb.org](mailto:jfutral@mbcb.org).

**PINEVIEW BAPTIST CHURCH**, Hattiesburg, Miss., Lebanon Baptist Assoc., seeking a full-time pastor. Please send resume with references to pastor search committee, Pineview Baptist Church, 19 Tower Rd., Hattiesburg, MS 39401.

**FBC COLDWATER, MISS., IS SEEKING** a full-time pastor. Please mail resume to Church DeMorse, 100 Golden Pond Cove, Coldwater, MS 38618. We will be receiving resumes until Nov. 15, 2008.

**THOMPSON BAPTIST CHURCH**, Smithdale, Miss., has two immediate openings for a bi-vocational minister of music and a full-time pianist. Energetic leadership for three-worship services on Sunday, choirs, specials services, etc. Send resume to search committee, 5226 N. Greensburg, Rd., Smithdale, MS 39664.

**FBC FANNIN, IS SEEKING A PART-TIME** youth minister with potential opportunity for full-time employment. Please send resume by Sept. 30 to FBC of Fannin, 101 Church Rd., Brandon, MS 39047, attn: Les Shelby, personnel committee. Or call 601-829-1180 or 601-906-7247.

**CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH IN** Brookhaven, MS, is seeking a full-time worship leader to lead a contemporary worship ministry. Please send resumes to 749 North Jackson St., Brookhaven, MS, 39601 or email to [ryan@cbcbrookhaven.org](mailto:ryan@cbcbrookhaven.org).

**IMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH IN** Vicksburg, MS seeking individual for full-time minister of music. Please send resume to Immanuel Baptist Church, attn: personnel committee, 6949 Hwy 61 South, Vicksburg, MS 39180 or email to [IBC\\_personnel@yahoo.com](mailto:IBC_personnel@yahoo.com).

**PELAHATCHIE BAPTIST CHURCH IS** seeking a part-time Minister of Music for Worship Services, Adult, youth, and children's choirs. Please forward resume to the Pelahatchie Baptist Church, search committee, P O Box 876, Pelahatchie, MS 39145, attn: Due McKinion. Email: [due@rankincounty.org](mailto:due@rankincounty.org).

**SALEM BAPTIST CHURCH, MARSHALL COUNTY**, Miss., seeking part-time youth director with potential for growth. Please send resume to search committee, P.O. Box 734, Potts Camp, MS 38659.

**FBC SHERWOOD, ARKANSAS IS SEEKING** a full-time minister of youth (6th through 12th). Send resume to youth minister search committee, 701 Country Club Road, Sherwood, Arkansas 72120 or email to [davis102@comcast.net](mailto:davis102@comcast.net).

**EAST POINTE BAPTIST IN SPANISH** Fort, Alabama, is looking for an enthusiastic full-time youth minister/education director. Qualified candidates should possess a seminary degree (Masters) and at least two years of full-time experience. Send your resume and recent photograph to [timothy.j.caldwell@usace.army.mil](mailto:timothy.j.caldwell@usace.army.mil), and to East Pointe Baptist Church, attn: Caldwell, P.O. Box 7517, Spanish Fort, Alabama 36577.

**HERBERT BAPTIST CHURCH, NESHOMA** county, seeking twenty, 1975 Baptist hymnals to purchase. Please call Linda Harrison at 601-416-7044.

**GULF SHORES VACATION HOME:** Fall special \$299/wk. Winter special \$269/wk, or \$1000/mo. Call 225-241-5667 or visit [www.gsfamilyretreat.com](http://www.gsfamilyretreat.com).

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## REVIVALS AND HOMECOMINGS

- Beulah Church, Lexington:** Homecoming, Sept. 28; service, 11 AM, followed by lunch and 1:30 PM singing with New Genesis; Joe Hill, speaker.
- Fredonia Church, New Albany:** Homecoming, Sept. 28; service, 10 AM, followed by covered dish luncheon. Winston Ross, speaker; Kenneth Clayton, music; Chris Aldridge, pastor.
- Longview Church, Pontotoc County:** 125th anniversary, Sept. 28; inspirational cantata, audio message from Mick Burczynski, and fellowship meal.
- Hope Church, Neshoba County:** Homecoming, Sept. 28; worship, 10:30 AM, followed by potluck lunch; Wayne Burkes, speaker; Reuben and Faye Moore, music; Dennis Duvall, pastor.
- Macedonia Church, Blue Mountain:** Homecoming and revival, Sept. 28 - Oct. 1; Sun., worship, 11 AM, followed by potluck lunch and 1:30 PM singing; Terry Hall, pastor and speaker; the Martins, music; Mon. - Wed., 7 PM; Charlie Cooper, speaker; special singers nightly.
- Four Mile Creek, Escatawpa:** Homecoming, Sept. 28; Sunday School high attendance, 9 AM; worship, 10 AM, followed by fellowship meal; Don Womble, speaker; Philip Marshall, pastor.
- Belden Church, Belden:** Homecoming, Sept. 28; Sunday School, 9 AM; worship, 10 AM, followed by fellowship meal; Horace Thomas, speaker; Paul Reed, music.
- First Church, Pecan Grove, Ellisville:** Homecoming, Sept. 28; services, 10 AM, followed by lunch; Cary Kimbrell, speaker.
- Country Woods Church, Byram:** Revival, Sept. 28 - Oct. 1; Sun., 6 PM; Mon. - Wed., 6:30 PM; Sammy Nuckolls, speaker; Will Reedy, worship.
- Bogue Chitto Church, Bogalusa:** Revival, Sept. 28 - Oct. 1; Sun., 11 AM and 6 PM; Mon. - Wed., 7 PM; Clark Stewart, speaker; Todd McDaniel, music.
- Academy Church, Tippah County:** Homecoming, Sept. 28; worship, 10:30 AM, followed by lunch and singing with the Reeves Family; Steven Cohea, speaker.
- Second Church, Greenville:** Homecoming, Oct. 26; worship, 10:30 AM, followed by lunch; Bob Connerley, speaker; Jimmy Smith, music; Ronny Spivey, pastor.
- Parkway Church, Houston:** Revival, Sept. 28 - Oct. 1; Sun., 10:15 AM and 6 PM; Mon. - Wed., 7 PM; Wayne Hudson, speaker; Steve and Becky Carver, music; Randy Rinehart, pastor.
- Sunrise Church, Carthage:** Homecoming, Sept. 28; Sunday School, 10 AM; worship, 11 AM, followed by covered dish meal; James White, speaker.
- Twin Lakes Church, Horn Lake:** Homecoming, Sept. 28; worship, 10 AM, followed by covered dish dinner on the grounds and gospel singing; The Barnetts, music; Bob Hankins, pastor.
- First Church, Greenwood:** 120th year homecoming; 9 AM, followed by dinner on the grounds; Ed McDaniel, speaker; Joe Pate, pastor.
- Holly Church, Alcorn County:** Revival, Sept. 28 - Oct. 1; speakers include Scott Carter, Ed Newton, Bob Pitman, Wayne Marshall, and Tommy Winders; John Boler, pastor; for information and service times, call (662) 286-3474.
- Smithville Church, Smithville:** Revival, Sept. 28 - Oct. 1; Sun., 11 AM and 6 PM; Mon. - Wed., 7 PM; Bert Harper, speaker; Brian Eades, music.



**The Baptist Record**  
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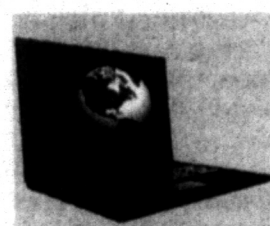


## STAFF CHANGES

- First Church, Verona,** has called Gary Roberson as pastor. He received his education at Blue Mountain College, Liberty University, and Southwestern Seminary. He comes from Shady Grove Church, Panola County. He is shown with his wife Gina, son Kenny, and twin girls, Ashlee and Amy.



1. The Robersons



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LZY LZSYN HKOYLZ XKL,  
QCL NKP LK JLYWR, WXM  
LK VSRR, WXM LK MYJLP-  
KB: S WO HKOY LZWL  
LZYB OSTZL ZWUY RSNY,  
WXM LZWL LZYB OXTZL  
ZWUY SL OKPY WQC-  
CXMWXLRB.  
DKZX LYX: LYX

Clue: H = C

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Second Peter Three Eight

## New York governor wins legal challenge on homosexual rights

NEW YORK (BP) — A New York State judge dismissed a lawsuit September 2 against Gov. David A. Paterson, ruling that he acted within his power when he ordered state agencies to recognize homosexual marriages from outside the state.

Although the decision by Justice Lucy Billings could be appealed, it nevertheless is a victory for homosexual marriage supporters nationwide. If Paterson's May directive stands, it will mean that the nation's first (California) and third most populous states will recognize homosexual marriages in one form or another.

Unlike California, New York homosexual couples cannot get "married" within the state, but they are only a short drive from Massachusetts or Canada — both of which border New York — where homosexual marriage is legal and they can obtain a license.

The lawsuit against Paterson, a Democrat, was filed by the Alliance Defense Fund, a pro-family group, on behalf of 16 state taxpayers, including two state senators and three state assemblymen. The suit stated that the governor "does not have authority to declare which

unions will be recognized as valid marriages in New York" and that such authority belongs to the legislature.

Billings disagreed, saying homosexual marriage is not specifically banned in New York. She ruled that Paterson's directive was a "permissible, if not mandated, step toward the objective of equality for a group for whom legal as well as practical barriers to equality persist."

The Alliance Defense Fund and other pro-family groups noted that the legislature has considered the legalization of homosexual marriage and thus far rejected it. The Democratic-controlled New York Assembly last year passed a bill that would legalize such relationships, although it has yet to pass the

Republican-controlled Senate.

Opponents of homosexual marriage also say the controversy over Paterson's directive underscores the need for states clearly to explain the definition of marriage in state law.

This fall three states — Arizona, California and Florida — will consider constitutional amendments that would protect the natural definition of marriage, thus banning homosexual marriage.

Jim Campbell, an attorney with the Alliance Defense Fund, criticized Billings' logic. "This decision enshrines the radical notion that the State of New York should forfeit its autonomy to define marriage for itself," he said, according to The New York Times.

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# JUST FOR THE RECORD



## MISSISSIPPI BAPTISTS



1. Farish and Thomas



2. Escatawpa Church GAs



3. Yancey and Hill



4. Branch Church RAs and GAs

1. **Eastwood Church, Indianola**, has elected R.W. Farish as lifetime deacon. Shown are Farish and pastor Billy R. Thomas.

2. GAs from **Escatawpa Church, Escatawpa**, collected items for Christmas in August. Shown, from left, are Natalie Blackwell, Heaven Neese, Emily Smith, and Dixie Gregory.

3. **First Church, Ripley**, recently ordained Brad Hill to the ministry. Shown are pastor Rex Yancey and Hill.

4. The GAs and RAs of **Branch Church, Morton**, recently gave \$10 each to build bears for the Children's Hospital. Shown are the participants.

5. **Hillsboro Church, Hillsboro**, burned the note on their new addition Sept. 7. Shown are pastor Ted Hawkins, Tim Hodges, and Rodney Russell.

6. **Hurley Church, Hurley**, honored Howard Duer Sept. 7 for 50 years of teaching Sunday School. Shown are pastor Breaux Tageant, Duer, and Randy Lundy.

7. **First Church, Byhalia**, ordained Jeff Simpson as deacon Sept. 15. Shown are Christal Simpson, Simpson, and pastor Anthony P. Langley.

8. **Macedonia Church, Meridian**, recently ordained Randall Palmer and Bobby Boyd as deacons. Shown are Palmer, pastor Hueston Adkins, and Boyd.

9. **Ashland Church, Ashland**, ordained Michael Stroup as deacon. Shown are pastor Randy Crews, Sr., and Shoup.

10. The wMu of **Unity Church, Iuka**, visited the Resource Center for Women, Corinth, collecting \$388.18 for the Baby Bottle Blessing. Jesse Massey, pastor.



5. Hillsboro Church note burning



6. Duer recognition



7. First Church Byhalia deacon ordination



8. Macedonia Church deacon ordination



9. Ashland Church deacon ordination



## JUST FOR THE RECORD



11. First Church, Vicksburg



12. Rock Hill Church baby dedication



13. Fredonia Church, New Albany

11. **First Church, Vicksburg**, celebrated 50 years of worship in their present facility July 6. John McCall, who was pastor at the time, preached the same sermon as he did July 6, 1958. John Strange was deacon chairman and Peggy Hollis was church financial secretary. Shown are Vicky McCall, Strange, McCall, and Hollis.

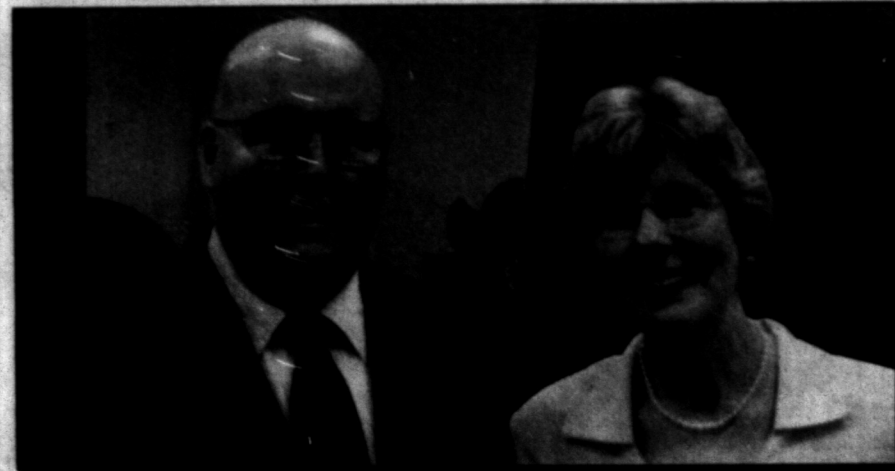
12. **Rock Hill Church, Rankin County** held a baby dedication Aug. 28. Shown are the Scalorns, the Turners, the Jacksons, and the Ryals.

13. **Fredonia Church, New Albany** recognized their Mission Friends, GAs, and RAs Sept. 3 for their participation in missions. Shown are the participants.

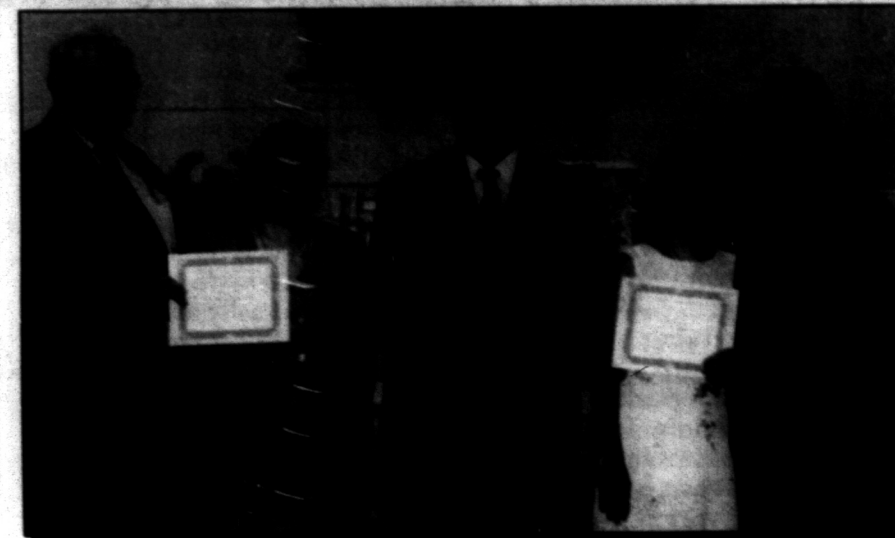
14. **University Church, Hattiesburg**, recently honored Tom Porter, associate minister of music and administration for 25 years of service with a brunch and program Sept. 7. Shown are Porter and his wife Nan.

15. **Bethesda Church, Terry**, will host a harvest festival Oct. 25, 4 p.m., with hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, sodas, desserts, toy walk, cakewalk, hayride, chili contest, and costume contest. Candy and toy donations appreciated.

16. **Highland Church, Crystal Springs**, ordained Josh Granger and Ben Waltman as deacons June 29. Shown are Waltman, Cheryl Waltman, pastor David Patterson, Granger, and Melanie Granger.



14. The Porters



16. Highland Church deacon ordination

## COLLEGE AND SEMINARY NEWS

1. Pianist Michael Gurt, the Paula Garvey Manship Distinguished Professor of Piano at Louisiana State University, will perform in concert Oct. 27 at 7 p.m. in the Smith Auditorium on the Hattiesburg campus of William Carey University. Tickets are \$10 for general admission, \$7 for senior citizens and WCU students and faculty are admitted free of charge. For more information call (601) 318-6175.
2. A debate at the Mississippi College School of Law on Oct. 3 will bring U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker, R-Miss., and his Democratic rival Ronnie Musgrove to the downtown Jackson campus. WLBT-TV 3 news anchor Maggie Wade will serve as the debate moderator, said Jim Rosenblatt, the MC law dean. The 60-minute debate will begin at 7 p.m. Audience members will be split among Wicker and Musgrove supporters and members of the MC law community.

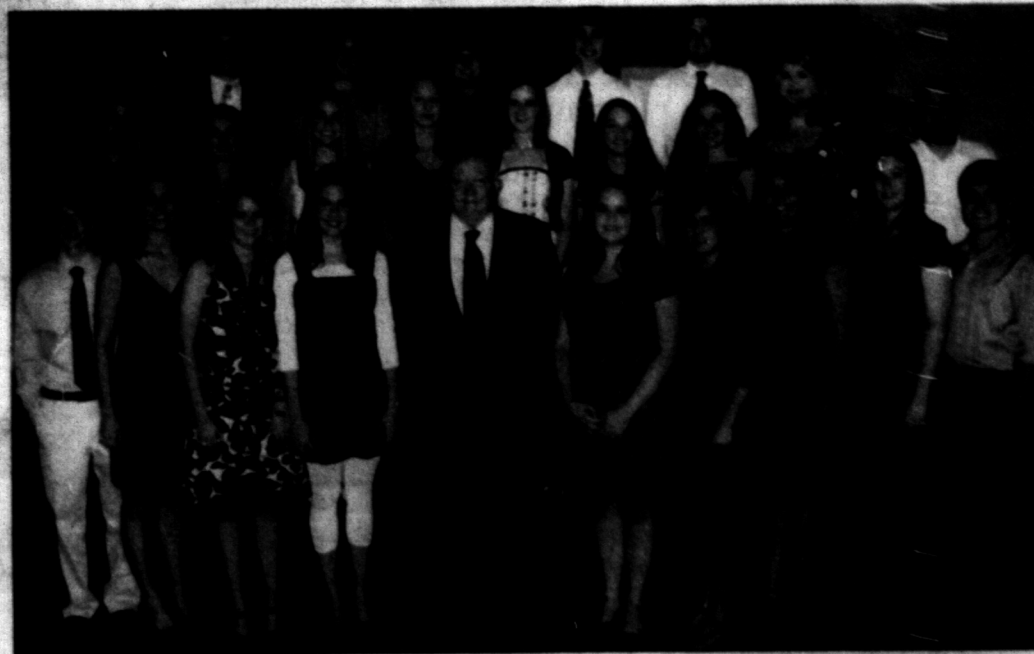
3. The Leland Speed Library at Mississippi College will hold its first annual book bazaar on Sept. 26-27. The library has collected over 10,000 books, videos, DVDs, CDs, and vinyl records which will be sold at bargain prices, most from 50 cents to \$2. These gently used items will be available in MC's Alumni Hall gym, located on the corner of Monroe and College streets from 12 noon to 6 p.m. on Friday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday. For more information, contact the Leland Speed Library at (601) 925-3908.

4. Robin W. Lovin, the Cary Maguire University Professor of Ethics at Southern Methodist University, will be the guest speaker at the Mississippi College School of Law at a forum on politics and religion. "The Religious Use of Politics: Temptation, Tool or Task," is the title of the colloquium on Sept. 29. The event begins at 11 a.m. at the MCSOL Auditorium. The public is invited.

## William Carey University Scholars



2008-2009



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This ad is provided by the Education Commission of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. The Education Commission is the primary liaison between MS Baptists and our three Baptist institutions of higher learning—Blue Mountain, Mississippi College, and William Carey University. The Commission acknowledges and is grateful for the support of MS Baptists for these three institutions. It is important to encourage potential students in our churches and youth programs to consider attending a Baptist college/university in Mississippi.



# Theaters filling up as Fireproof premieres September 26

FARGO, N.D. (BP)—The 230-mile drive from Fargo, N.D., to Minneapolis, Mn., takes about three and a half hours — not a bad distance for a vacation or a weekend getaway but a bit too long of a drive to watch a movie.

That's the situation Penny Crowder of Fargo found herself in in recent weeks when she contemplated how and where she was going to watch the Sept. 26 opening of Fireproof, the latest release from the makers of the 2006 surprise hit Facing the Giants.

She says she would have driven to Minneapolis — after all, she was deeply moved by Facing the Giants and the story of the congregation, Sherwood Church in Albany, Ga., that filmed it — but she wanted to see it closer to home and she wanted her friends and the people of Fargo to watch it, too.

So Crowder, after much prayer, pledged \$6,500 of her own money to bring it to her city. That large chunk of change allowed her to purchase 1,000 tickets — the minimum required to bring it to her town — at a discount of \$6.50 each.

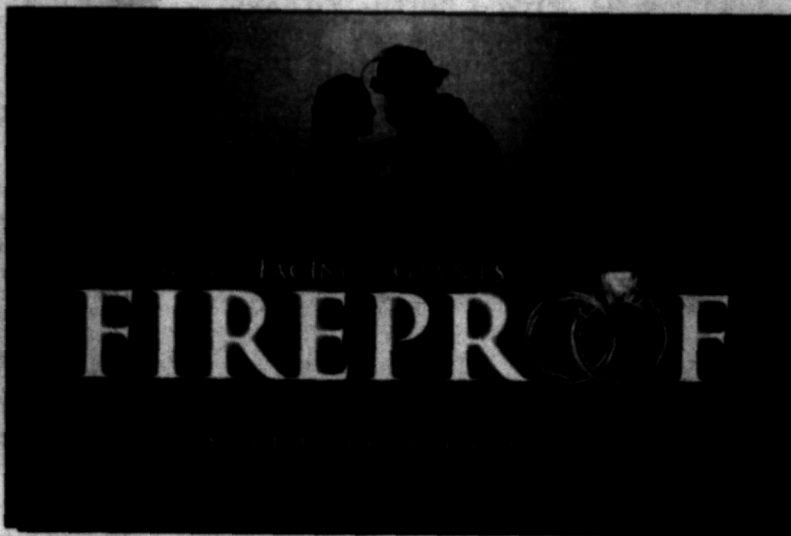
Crowder, an insurance agent, now is in charge of selling them to recoup her costs as well as to raise money for World Vision Experience, a worldwide AIDS ministry. She's re-selling them for eight dollars, the normal price of a

ticket. Thus far, she's had a great response.

Fireproof (rated PG for thematic elements) tells the story of a troubled marriage that is headed for divorce and how the husband, a firefighter played by Kirk Cameron, tries to save it. It's been screened for Christian leaders all summer, often to standing ovations, and has received positive reviews, many of which say the newest film is better than its predecessor. Fireproof had a budget five times that of Facing the Giants.

"I've known so many people this year that have had marital problems," Crowder told Baptist Press. "I personally am single and have never been married, but of course I have a lot of married friends and I have seen the challenges and I just thought, 'This is an investment in my friends,' and if I can't sell 1,000 tickets in the Fargo area — I'm an insurance agent, for goodness sake..."

The Fargo theater owner was impressed enough by the local and nationwide buzz behind the film that he decided to keep Fireproof in town for the entire week and not



just for the one night that Crowder purchased.

"It's not about me. It's a God thing," said Crowder, who attends Atonement Lutheran Church in Fargo, N.D. "God is the one that planted a seed. He's the one that made me sign my name on the line, and He has made this thing spread like wildfire. I'm getting e-mails and calls [about movie tickets] from people I don't know, from towns I don't know. There's a group who is taking a bus an hour away from here and bringing a busload of people."

Amazingly, Crowder made her commitment without even seeing a screening of the film. The movie already has made an impact in Fargo, even though it hasn't opened. Crowder said she knows of one couple in her area who was considering a divorce,

but after watching the Fireproof trailer decided to see if they can work things out.

"If you get that from a trailer, I can't imagine the power of the film," she said.

Facing the Giants was successful in large measure because churches got behind the movie and supported it on opening weekend, giving it a

boost and allowing it to stay in theaters for multiple weeks as well as to spread to other cities.

"September 26 is huge. That opening weekend determines how it spreads," said Michael Catt, executive producer of the film and senior pastor of Sherwood Church. "With Facing the Giants... we started in 400 theaters and ended up in over 1,000, and a lot of that was based on what happened the first weekend, because it let people know this is a legitimate film."

"The key to that was churches, the key to that was pastors standing up in their pulpits and saying, 'We gripe about Hollywood. Here's something positive. It's a film we can go to and support.'"

Leaders of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, Focus on the Family and FamilyLife are urging their constituents to see the film.

Following are several ways churches can use the movie and help promote it:

- Buying all the tickets for a particular showing. In many such instances, theater owners will allow pastors and church leaders to address the audience before and after the movie if they have purchased all the tickets. (For information, visit [FireproofTheMovie.com](http://FireproofTheMovie.com) and click on "Take Action." Additional resources are available at [FireproofMyMarriage.com](http://FireproofMyMarriage.com).)

- Offering babysitting on a particular night — promoting it as a date night — to allow couples with small children to go see the movie.

- Planning a sermon/sermon series on marriage to coincide with the film's release.

- Having Christian couples invite other couples to see the movie together.

- Giving movie tickets to local firefighters and encouraging them to take their spouses.

- Showing the movie's trailer to church members. (A link for a free download is available through the [FireproofMyMarriage.com](http://FireproofMyMarriage.com) website. Click on Churches, and then click Click Here for Fireproof Church Campaign Resources and Information. Lastly, click on the Click Here to Download Clips from the Movie button. A free teaser trailer is at the bottom.)

- Placing Fireproof icons on the church's website. They can be downloaded at [FireproofTheMovie.com](http://FireproofTheMovie.com). Click on Fireproof Widgets and Tools.

- Purchasing copies of The Love Dare book — as seen in the movie — and giving it to church members. Visit [LoveDareBook.com](http://LoveDareBook.com).

## JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Paschal

1. First Church, Laurel, is hosting a Women's Conference Oct. 4. Reservations requested by Oct. 1. Janet Paschal and Trudy Cathy White, leaders. Paschal will be in concert Oct. 5, 10:30 a.m. For information, call (601) 649-5710.

2. Old Hebron Church, New Hebron, will host Christy Rose Smith in concert Oct. 12, 6 p.m.

3. Students from Cleary Church, Florence, will participate in Fields of Faith event at the Florence High School baseball field Oct. 8, 7 p.m. Students from all over Rankin County will also participate in the interdenominational event.

4. First Church, Hattiesburg, held an open house for their new 44,000 sq. ft. children's building Aug. 3.

5. Good Hope Church, Panola County, held a baby dedication Aug. 31. Shown are Jeremy and Kim Gray with daughter Sophie; T.J. Talley with daughter Makynza; Jason and Susan Morris with son Owen, and Jody and Libby Morris with son Bentley.

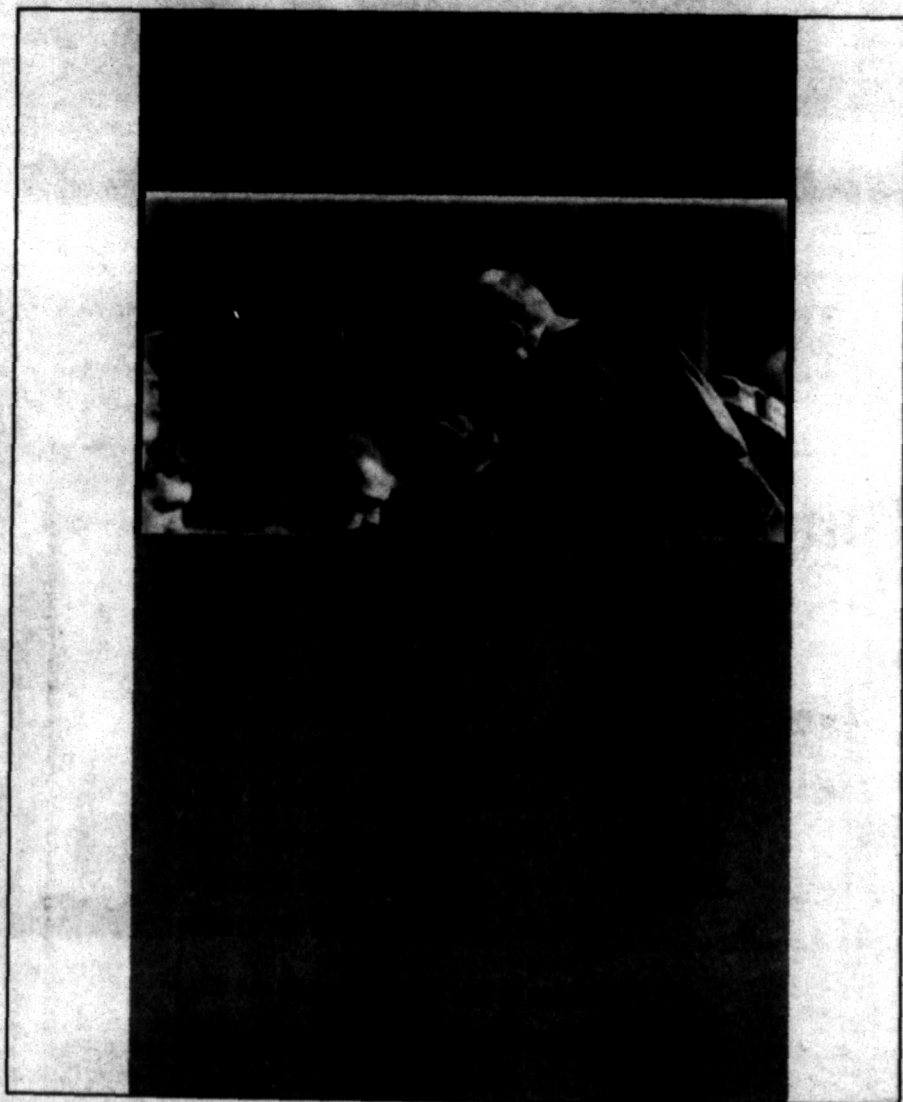


5. Good Hope Church baby dedication

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# World Hunger Offering helping needy in U.S., too

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — With unemployment and consumer food prices rising, gasoline costs at near-record levels and the possibility of more job layoffs looming on the horizon, business is sadly booming for the 1,500 domestic hunger ministries that receive support from the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund.

While 80% of the World Hunger Fund is earmarked for the International Mission Board (IMB) to fight world hunger, the remaining 20% is dedicated to feed the hungry of North America and is administered by the North American Mission Board (NAMB).

Some 3.5 million meals were served to North America's hungry in 2007 and as a result 35,000 professions of faith were recorded throughout the continent. Because of careful management and low overhead, the cost of a meal at a Southern Baptist hunger ministry averages about 40 cents, according to Sandy Wood, hunger ministry specialist on NAMB's servant and ministry evangelism team.

More than 67,000 volunteers assisted at hunger ministry sites throughout the United States in 2007, Wood said. Some 7,200 new hunger ministry volunteers were trained in evangelism during the year as well. The Gospel was shared with more than 580,000 visitors to SBC hunger ministries.

For missionaries like Angelia Bostick in Brownwood, Texas, and Steve Faith in New Albany, Ind. — both longtime veterans of feeding ministries — the workdays are long, hard and extremely tiring. No one could blame them if they quit tomorrow. But they won't.

For 15 years, Bostick has headed up the Heart of Texas Good Samaritan Ministry in rural Brown County, located three hours south of Dallas. One-third of the county's 40,000 residents live in poverty.

Bostick, 51, is a NAMB missionary. Most of her financial support for the food ministry comes from domestic World Hunger Funds via area

Southern Baptist churches and the local Brown Baptist Association. The Brownwood food pantry and warehouse also is an inter-denominational effort that involves about 200 Methodist, Presbyterian, Catholic, Nazarene, and Assembly of God volunteers.

The facility requires 20 volunteers a day to handle food distribution.

"Southern Baptists started the ministry, but there are no theological differences about what Jesus said about helping the poor," said Bostick, a longtime resident of Brownwood. "We want to work together because the resources here are so limited."

Brownwood's economic situation is fragile, Bostick said. Her ministry added 50 new families at the end of July, on top of the 600 families it normally serves each month. In November and December, the number of families requesting food typically expands to 800 because of seasonal layoffs by local plants and factories.

Only Brown County residents can receive food from the ministry, Bostick said. Families can come to the pantry once each month. The amount of food distributed depends on family size, but each family donation consists of several grocery bags, including frozen and canned meat, cereals, vegetables, rice, pasta, and peanut butter.

"The majority of the people who come in are elderly or disabled on fixed incomes. Brown County has a higher percentage of elderly than the Texas average," Bostick said. "We also have a lot of the working poor, because there are not a lot of good paying jobs around Brownwood. Most make minimum wage." Sixty percent of the "customers" are Anglo, 30% are Hispanic, and the remaining 10% are African-American.

Fifteen years ago, Bostick agreed to take the ministry's executive director job until someone else could be found. No one ever was.

"I had served on the original



**FOOD MINISTRY** — Angelia Bostick (left), executive director of the Heart of Texas Good Samaritan Ministry for the past 15 years, helps prepare another buggy of free groceries for a local Brownwood, Texas family in need. The ministry distributes food to some 650 area families each month. (BP photo by Mark Dumas)

team creating the ministry," says Bostick, "but running the warehouse and pantry were not what I was trained to do. I wanted to teach. Now, 15 years later, I'm still in the job."

"This is what God called me to do and He prepared me to do it all my life," said Bostick, a preacher's kid and a graduate of Brownwood High School, nearby Howard Payne University and Southwestern Seminary. She was 17 when she felt called to be a missionary.

"Sometimes I get tired and want to quit. But like Jeremiah, there's a fire that burns in me and won't go out," she said. "Sure, you get tired sometimes. But I've never doubted that God called me to do this. How could I do less?"

A thousand miles away from Bostick in central Texas, it takes a lot of "Faith" — Steve Faith, that is — to run the Southeast Indiana Baptist Food Warehouse in New Albany, Ind. Faith, 64, is administrative community evangelism director for the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana.

Unlike Bostick — whose feeding pantry distributes directly to families — Faith is more like a "wholesaler" of free food for the hungry. He gets

large ministries such as Feed the Children or Operation Blessing to donate pallets of food, paper goods, and other products needed by families. He also asks large firms like Tyson Foods to donate their products.

No associational funds are ever spent on the food or products themselves, which are always donated and then distributed free of charge to churches or other hunger ministries with 501(c)3 charitable tax status.

"Our (the association's) only expense is rental of trucks and the diesel fuel we need," Faith said. With diesel fuel now up to as much as five dollars a gallon, the association's budget is stretched thin.

"I don't get the world hunger funds directly," Faith said. "We have 63 churches in our association and nine of them get the hunger funds. But we couldn't do without them." Faith is co-supported by the Indiana state convention and the North American Mission Board.

From January until the end of July 2008, the warehouse received and distributed 1.5 million pounds of "product," Faith said. He figures he contributes some 90,000 meals a month in the south Indiana area.

"We can unload a tractor trailer of any product in 12 minutes. Many loads come in at night. Sometimes I don't know exactly what I have until I get it here. He said whether the load comes in at night or early the next morning, it will be unloaded and turned around in less than a day — sometimes in 90 minutes. Perishable items like Tyson's chicken get top priority."

Faith, who established the warehouse — located on one end of the associational office — in 2000, works 12-hour days, six days a week. He has to be on the scene when the food or other products are delivered to the warehouse, which takes him away from his wife many evenings.

"I do it because I just love people," Faith says. "Brother, there are people out there and they really need help. We have more needs than product. It's currently worse than I've ever seen it. In this economy, many families are having to make tough decisions — do we buy food or do we buy gas so we can get to and from work?"

Faith loves to tell the stories of lives transformed through their ministry.

"One family needed a pack of diapers for their baby," he recalled. "When they visited a church to pick up the diapers along with their food, the mom and dad — both in their 30s and unmarried — were both saved. They later got married and helped bring another dozen of their relatives to the Lord."

"Sadly, the dad later died. But because of a single box of diapers, he's in heaven today," Faith added. "And after his death, five of his friends accepted Christ."

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## THE VILLAGE VIEW



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## GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORY

SEPT. 8 - SEPT. 22

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Ms. Nett Madden  
Ms. Jackie White  
Ms. Nell Woodall  
Ms. Dorothy Broussard  
Mrs. Inez Barlow  
Eloise Hunter SSC, FBC-  
McComb  
Mr. Clovis Harden  
Cindy & Clayton Dugan  
Allen & Betty Hemphill  
Joy Group, Neshoba BC-  
Union  
Mrs. Jessie Hemphill  
Eloise Hunter SSC, FBC-  
McComb  
Mr. & Mrs. Ronnie Hudson  
Dr. Joe Lovelady's SSC, N  
Oxford BC  
Dr. John G. McCall  
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Kathryn Moody  
Kathryn Bass Moody  
Class, FBC-Poplarville

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Frances & Rich  
Defenbaugh  
Leslie Babbitt  
Ms. Margaret H. Durham  
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Hilbert & Fay Shiers  
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Audrey Davis  
Orby & Brenda Wright  
Gale Denley  
Ms. Maida C. Stegall  
S. Gale Denley  
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Mary Lyn Perkins  
Mrs. Louise Draughn  
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SSC, Arlington Hgts BC  
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Ms. Shirlene Priest  
Mrs. Virgie Etheridge  
Ms. Shirlene Priest  
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Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Truman  
Manning & Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Hamillo  
Pierce & Family  
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& Family

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Mrs. Ida Mae Bridges  
Bobby Hall  
Mrs. Tena Haskins  
Essie Hall  
Cato BC-Mendenhall  
Flora Lee Hamilton  
Ladies SSC, Tuscola BC-  
Lena  
Mother & Sister of Peggy  
Harper  
Hilbert & Fay Shiers  
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Mrs. Shirley White  
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## HOW WE CAN HELP YOUR FAMILY

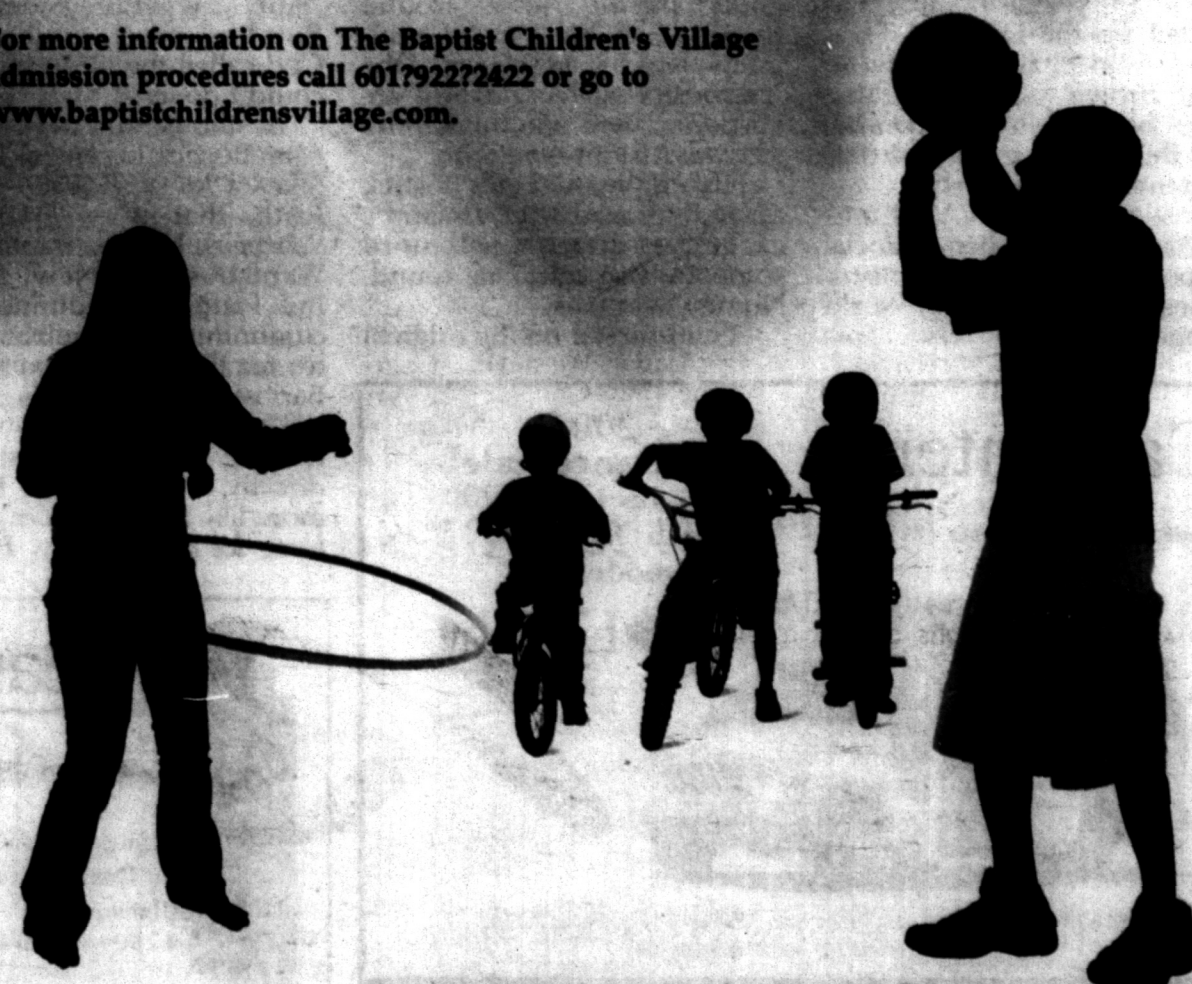
### The Baptist Children's Village Admission Procedures

The mission of The Baptist Children's Village is to help children and their families fully understand and experience the healing ministry of Christ by meeting their daily needs, and inspiring them to become Christian adults who are happy, healthy and mature. About 300 children are touched through this mission each year, on one of the 7 campuses of The Baptist Children's Village located across Mississippi.

If you are a parent, grandparent, legal guardian or public agency representative who needs the services of The BCV, the following information will direct you through The Baptist Children's Village admissions process.

1. The legal custodian of the child should call (601) 922-2242 and ask to speak with the Intake Coordinator. The Intake Coordinator will seek to determine if the applicant is a candidate for Emergency Care, Extended Care, or if referral to another resource better meets the family needs.
  - If immediate care is considered to be the best option, and if there are beds available, the child's admission is scheduled with the Emergency Care Counselor.
  - If Extended Care is appropriate, an application is mailed or faxed to the legal guardian of the child or children.
2. When a completed application is returned, with necessary documents, an Intake Study is scheduled. Most studies are scheduled weekly on Monday and/or Friday. The study is conducted by the Intake Social Worker and is approximately two hours in length. The legal guardian and child or children will need to be present.
3. After the intake study is complete, the Intake Social Worker will present the application to the Admissions Committee for approval. This committee meets weekly and the members of this committee are a team of professionals that includes a Clinical Psychologist and Counselors. Also in Attendance are the Intake Coordinator, and other qualified staff. The committee will determine if the needs of applicant can be best served by the services of The Baptist Children's Village.

For more information on The Baptist Children's Village admission procedures call 601-922-2242 or go to [www.baptistchildrensvillage.com](http://www.baptistchildrensvillage.com).





# BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

## Use It or Lose It

Matthew 25:14-30

By Bobby McKay

In his book, *The Preaching Pastor*, Frank Pollard uses his brilliant style to illustrate the enduring captivation that buried treasures can provide. Pollard shared that he conducted research to determine whether or not there were any legends of buried treasure within the folklore of Mississippi history. He discovered in the state archives numerous accounts of hidden riches in our state. Allow Pollard to share one of these stories: "Twenty miles from Natchez on the Trace is a place called Robbers' Roost. It is said that this is where robbers gathered their loot. The estimated value ranges from forty-five thousand to forty million dollars. Some people can make a story more interesting than others."

Through his extensive research he discovered that while there is an assortment of legends throughout Mississippi history, from the Delta to the Gulf Coast, none have produced a single dime. We conclude this month's study with yet another parable of Jesus. This lesson will stress the importance of using and investing our talents instead of hiding what the Father has graciously given to each of us.

### I. The Disbursements

My gift is not singing. If you do not believe me, ask the choir or the Minister of Worship where I serve as pastor. It is not that I worry about it; it is just obvious that it is not what God gifted me to do. Do not be so consumed with the gift or gifts you do not have that you fail to



Bobby McKay

nurture and develop the gifts God has given to you specifically. Verses 14b and 15 state that the master "entrusted to them his property, to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability (RSV)." The master

was heading out on a long journey and he demonstrated confidence in each of these men by entrusting them with a designated amount of money.

When it came time to disburse the finances, he gave to each according to what he knew that servant was able to manage. This is a key theme throughout this parable, do not miss it. God provides for us everything we need to be effective in kingdom work. Do not fall in the trap of comparing gifts with others around you. God knows much better than we do what He desires for our life. Humbly receive the good gifts God has blessed you with and get busy serving Him!

### II. The Digging

Verse 18 captures the appalling mistake of the servant who was given one talent. To put it simply: he dug up some dirt and buried what the master had entrusted him to care for. The scripture indicates that the master's intent was for the servants to put the money to good use and not just maintain the status quo (see verse 27). Several factors could have led to the burial of this talent. Fear, ignorance, lack of faith, or laziness could have served as the motivation; nevertheless the result was the same. An opportunity for faithfulness and obedience had been squandered.

I have often wondered the amount of people in churches who are called to sing, teach, preach, or serve in some capacity. Yet, they spend their whole life trying to hide the treasure(s) God has given them because they are afraid or unaware of how He might use them. These "Baptist Buried Treasures" are hurting many churches and our denomination as a whole. Men

and women, be faithful and obedient to the Master by investing your gifts and talents in your local church and community.

### III. The Disillusion

With his talent taken away from him (verse 28), the servant stood before the master ashamed and afraid. He was a poor steward of the talent and now he would pay the price. I believe that what this servant did not realize was that the talent was never completely his to begin with. It was his because of a gracious gift from his master. Each gift that you and I are blessed with comes from the Lord. They are not for our own promotion, but rather His glory. Do not become disillusioned in your thinking that God needs any of us to accomplish His will. It is a privilege and honor that we share the gifts He has given us to advance the message of Christ and His saving grace. Friends, use it or lose it!

McKay is pastor of Oakvale Church, Oak Vale.

# EXPLORE THE BIBLE

## Seek God's Guidance

1 Samuel 8; 9:1-2, 17; 10:1, 17, 20-25; 11:14-15; 12: 1-2, 13-15, 20-25

By Ginger M. Caughman

How long has it been since you played with a child stacking wooden blocks, one on top of the other? How high did you go before they tumbled over? Very young preschoolers delight in knocking the blocks down and hearing the crash. As children mature they begin to realize the importance of the placement of that first block which determines how high the tower can go. A good foundation is important.

### Building Blocks of Stability

In our Christian life the foundation is essential (1 Cor. 3:11). Jesus Christ is our chief cornerstone (Eph. 2:20). Our salvation in Him is once for all! But we each continue to need God's guidance all through life's experiences. In Unit 2 titled: "Building Blocks of Stability," we will

cover Chapters 8 through 31 in only five lessons so begin now to read ahead to follow the unfolding narrative.

Time flies. Chapter 8 begins, "When Samuel grew old."

My Sr. ladies like to have fun. Charlie Prince, our department director, has a thoughtful, timely devotional with Scripture each Sunday morning. But then we look forward to his joke and laughing together. Playfully, Mary Engelbreit has illustrated: "Time flies whether you're having fun or not."

The ladies and men in my SS department are not old in their 80's and 90's because their attitudes and actions are young-at-heart. They are among the many praying me through this assignment. We never outgrow our need for God. God has chosen us, imperfect though we



Caughman

are, to be His people and to have a relationship with Him through our Savior Jesus Christ.

### 1. Ask for God's Guidance

The story moves quickly. Ironically Samuel made the same mistake as Eli. His sons were dishon-

est and did not walk in the ways of their father. The people desired a king like their pagan neighbors. "Israel's insistence on having a king was an error of timing and motivation because the law had provided for a king" (See Deuteronomy 17:14-15). Samuel was upset but God said the people had rejected Him not Samuel. The Lord allowed a king and directed Samuel in the choice. The focus this week is on the selection of Saul as Israel's first king. (Details are in 1 Sam. 9 and 10 as Samuel gives Saul a message from God). Unlike the floundering Israelites, we will maintain stability in our lives when we seek God's guidance in major life transitions.

### 2. Discerning God's Guidance

Change is a part of our lives. Change may be intentional or beyond our control. But either way, God wants us to seek and discern His will for our lives. He wants us to have full, meaningful even abundant lives (John 10:10).

Samuel called the Israelites to the Lord at Mizpah, showed them Saul, the man God had chosen, and explained the regulations of the kingship.

### 3. Committing to God's Guidance

Samuel called a national assembly at Gilgal to confirm Saul's kingship. By God's grace, let us choose attitudes and actions that build stability in our daily Christian lives.

One of my surprises, even disappointments my first year teaching school was thinking I would teach, students would learn, and I'd move on to the next topic. Everyone doesn't "get it" the first time. Even teaching the Bible to children for many years, I often wished I could pour Bible knowledge into their heads. Of course no learning takes place all at once, even for mature Christians. I'm still learning and so are

you. We build precept on precept, truth upon truth. God's Word is clear. Obedience is a choice! The Bible never changes but our experiences change either by our choice or by circumstances.

In Samuel's farewell speech he challenged both the people and the king. "If both you and the king follow the Lord, good!" Then Samuel gave warnings about disobedience and promised to pray and continue to teach the people.

Be assured dear friends, we do build stability by committing ourselves to follow God's guidelines through all of life's transitions. Let us carry out God's instructions from His Word and embrace God's perspective to gain stability in our turbulent world. Please pray for America. Let us heed Samuel's prayer (1 Sam. 12:24 GNT) as ours: "Obey the Lord and serve Him faithfully with all your heart. Remember the great things He has done for you."

Caughman teaches a senior ladies Sunday School class at First Church Magee.

# Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if

submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

THE BAPTIST  
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# IMB sending 83 news workers to fields around world

JONESBORO, Ga. (BP) — Monkeys, rope swings, and alligators were all part of Adam Huser's life growing up as a missionary kid in the jungles of Peru.

Adam sensed many years ago that being a missionary may be his calling as well. That was affirmed the first time he and his father made the three-day trek to a remote village in the Andes mountains.

"None of the people had ever seen a white person before," he recalled. The villagers were desperate for truth. "My dad baptized an entire village in an ice-cold mountain stream because they were so hungry to know God. That image has stuck with me all my life."

Adam and his wife Jessica were among 83 new International Mission Board (IMB) missionaries appointed September 10 at First Church in Jonesboro, Ga. They join more than 5,300 other missionaries serving around the world.

Adam said his experiences in Peru prepared him to serve in an extreme way. His wife also experienced her share of extreme living conditions while serving as a journeyman. Rats, rickshaws, and traffic jams were common experiences for Jessica during her two years in Asia.

"Adam's heart for Peru and the urgencies of the vast lostness there [have] been contagious," Jessica said. The couple will soon join the IMB's Xtreme Team in sharing the Good News in the most remote places of the Peruvian jungles.

Andy and Michelle Milam may not have had extreme living

conditions like the Husers, but they share their call to missions.

Andy, a music graduate from Union University in Jackson, Tn., remembers as a boy reading missionary birthdays in the Open Windows devotional and praying for each one by name. After the couple married in 1991, Andy said they had the privilege of living next to Ramona Mercer, Union's first missionary-in-residence.

He once asked her how he'd know his calling to the mission field. "God will show you," she told him.

Ten years later, at Alpha Church in Morristown, Tn., Andy began sensing God leading him to give his life completely to missions. "I was searching for God's perfect will in my quiet times," he said. "I ...began to pour my heart out to God, asking Him to show me His direction for my life."

It was then he spotted a copy of Open Windows. It had been years since he last turned the pages of the devotional. Immediately he flipped to the missionary birthdays. Next to the day's date was a familiar name: Ramona Mercer.

"The question I had asked her in college came directly to my mind... Was this coincidence? No. [God] had made it very clear to me what His will was for my life."

Andy and his family will be taking the Gospel to the people of Portugal.

Tom Elliff, senior vice president of spiritual nurture at the IMB, challenged the congregation to be goers and tellers of the Gospel. There are three types of



PREPARED TO SERVE — Adam and Jessica Huser share their testimony during the missionary appointment service at First Church in Jonesboro, Ga. The Husers will be serving in remote regions of Peru with the Xtreme Team of the International Mission Board. They were among 83 new missionaries appointed for service September 10. (BP photo).

believers, Elliff said — sitters, getters, and the goers and tellers.

Speaking from 2 Kings 7, he compared the types of believers with the story of the four lepers sitting at the city gate of Samaria. A sitter is a person who is conscious of the world's need for the Gospel but doesn't do much about it, Elliff said, adding that this is probably the largest category of believers.

The second category of believers, getters, are sitters with common sense, he said. The lepers in 2 Kings 7 were getters. "Why sit we here until we die?" they asked one another in verses 3 and 4. "If we go out there [to the Aramean camp], they might kill us, but if we sit here we will die also."

"You can't be too hard on getters," Elliff said. "Getters are people who say, 'There is bound to be

more, and I want it.' In a society that commends greed ...many believers have become pretty greedy spiritually. There's a problem when we have an appetite for things of God but no activity [for] the things of God."

Elliff challenged the crowd to be goers and tellers. "With so many places to go, people forget to tell. The Great Commission is... going and telling."

## Seminary rolls out cellular telephone phone notification system

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Since Hurricane Gustav, good news has been arriving to cell phones of New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) families

through the seminary's new priority text messaging system.

The system has been an information lifeline for the seminary community during

the evacuation. When the storm moved out of the New Orleans area, a brief text message offered the following report: "Campus secure. Damage minimal. Reopening Monday. Return possible Thursday. Praise the Lord!"

Many seminary students, professors and staff members first heard about the evacuation through the text messaging list, and they also have received daily updates on campus' status.

Among the many lessons learned following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, seminary officials worked to develop more reliable communication options. The priority text message system was implemented to provide urgent, concise messages to the seminary family in emergency situations. Since the system was implemented in 2007, the seminary has urged students, professors and staff members opt in to the system via a secure online registration.

The seminary also developed a plan to address the computing needs during an evacuation. At the start of hurricane season, the seminary rented a moving truck to take essential computers and servers to the seminary's North Georgia Hub in Atlanta. By August 31, the seminary's servers and website management had been transferred to Atlanta. The move ensured that the seminary website would be available to provide information throughout the storm. Longer, more detailed messages have been posted on the site.

Kelley wrote on the seminary website, "The news continues to be good. Our operations crew and others are already at work cleaning up the campus, and similar work is beginning all over the city." Kelley noted: "We had no flood damage at all, and no evidence yet of any internal damage to buildings, homes, or apartments."

Kelley has used the web updates as an opportunity to provide pastoral encouragement to the seminary family.

"I conclude this update with a personal word from the journey of my soul with God. These last three years have been for me a Ph.D. seminar on the mercy of God," Kelley wrote. "There is a mystery I cannot penetrate on how and why God chooses the mercy He provides to His people. What is crystal clear, however, is that in ALL circumstances God gives mercy and grace sufficient for the needs of his children (Romans 8:28-39)."

"That is a conviction that is becoming very precious to me, and I hope to you. Perhaps because New Orleans has a seminary training leaders for the Church all over the world, God is using our city as the location for this Ph.D. seminar in His mercy. In any case, I pray that we will all be faithful witnesses to the glory, mercy, and grace of God in these times and circumstances."

